

Chapter One

Introduction: Why Prepare For INS Interview

It is necessary to prepare carefully before you go to the interview. This book includes alt forms used and questions asked which will help you to feel confident. Immigration interviews seem like cross-examination without evidence-in-chief. It is a situation whereby the District Adjudicating Officer, otherwise called «the examiner» in this book, could suddenly pounce on you with quick and embarrassing questions which you must answer without a second thought. For example, if an examiner suddenly asks «facing the ceiling in your bedroom, what side did you sleep last night?», any pause on your part to give it a thought before saying «right» or «left» would immediately cast aspersions on your demeanor thereby raising doubts in his mind. It is a scenario, where there is no limit, no rules and absolutely nothing can be done to curtail possible abuse of the power given to an examiner to toy with you. Don't you think it makes sense for you to prepare yourself for this war-like experience! Unfortunately, one could suddenly become a nervous wreck. In extreme cases, the applicant goes blank, becomes completely inaudible or gives answers that do not make sense because his thinking pad is shut down. Sometime ago, there was an interview with a couple and their three children. They were all confident that the green card will be approved without any much ado. However, they were interviewed by a probing examiner. A particularly simple question was asked, it was equally leading, which means in legal terms «suggesting the answer». The examiner, looking straight into client's eyes said; «before your marriage, your wife was your girlfriend! » My client suddenly lost his composure and answered «No», The examiner joked, «so you had other women.» The client became ice-cold. They succeeded at the interview because the children were irrefutable evidence of marriage and a real estate deed was also presented. It is easy to laugh and make jest of such a client, but you never can tell how well you will perform until you occupy the «hot seat». Many immigrants who are truly married come crumbling like a pack of cards under such intense and sudden «cross-examination». The simple solution to helping these «untested witnesses» is to expose them to some possible questions they might have to face at the interview. Funny enough, these immigrants are already prepped by «street attorneys», who will not hesitate to give unsolicited counsel, with some myths about immigration interviews that are not true. This book will allay the fears of these immigrants and make attending the interview a memorable experience for them. Contrary to the belief of a certain school of thought that suggests that it is not ethical to give applicants the feet of the interview; it is a wise saying that «practice makes perfection». Having the feel of the interview does not guarantee success, but could at least help prepare the mind of the applicant for the real thing. Most of the couples being bombarded with probing questions got married few months before the interview, they have not lived together long enough to know each other so well or to have become «experts» concerning information relating to each other. A little help in guiding them will go a long way. A situation similar to what immigrants are made to face during immigration interviews popped up on TV sometime ago. The program is called «Newly Weds Game». It is a funny program meant to test how much a couple knows about each other. I discovered that these couples knew very little about one another. Therefore, it is possible to be married, live together and know very little about each other. This book will remove your fears and improve your comfort level as you prepare for your interview. It is designed to help immigrants face regular and «stokes» interview. It is simply green card interview made easy. The decisions of the immigration examiners are discretionary. They base their assessment of your case on your demeanor, prompt response to questions and their perception of you with regards to whether or not you are telling the truth. You need to be prepared to excel. The questions in this book were developed from all regular and «stokes» interviews. Have fun while preparing for your interview. Good luck.

Chapter Two

Q&A About Petitioner & Beneficiary

At any green card interview, particularly one based on marriage, the first set of questions is usually directed towards the background information of both the petitioner and the beneficiary. The examiner will test the knowledge of the petitioner about the beneficiary and vice versa. Any «cloudy» answer at this stage could lead to the examiner forming a negative opinion about the parties. Both the petitioner and the beneficiary are required to be sharp, coherent, consistent and credible with their answers. There is no substitute for adequate preparation since the goal could be lost at this stage, if care is not taken. On the average, a regular green card interview lasts for about twenty minutes. The patience level of most examiners is close to zero because of the number of people they are required to interview per day. They are quick to schedule parties for the second interview popularly known as «stokes» interview. The stokes interview is a dreadful and rigorous interview applicants would rather avoid. At a stokes interview, the husband will be separated from the wife and questioned separately. The answers given by the couple will be compared. Any inconsistencies will result in denial of the application. The only way to escape this is to be adequately prepared for the first interview and pass. This book will give you the tools needed for success at both regular and «stokes» interviews. The questions in this workbook are not gender sensitive. They are live-questions from interviews in the past few years. Have fun while you prepare for your interview. Now there are questions from interviews and comments to them.

Q. What is your full name?

Comment: This question appears harmless, but it is very important. Some applicants are known on the street by multiple names. Let your wife know your legal names. Some try to Americanize their names and end up confusing the examiner. For example, if you are known as Abbey, but your legal name is Abiodun, let your spouse know. The spelling of your name is equally important. Sometime ago, an American, was asked to spell the African name of his wife. He could not. He became destabilized and unstable all through.

2. Q. Any other name used?

Comment: This is usually your maiden name or other names disclosed in documents given to the USCIS such as marriage certificates, divorce certificates and change of name documents. Couples are expected to know one another beyond names.

3. Q. What is your date of birth?

Comment: The examiner has the information in the forms submitted. He is simply testing your knowledge of each other. Immigrants from countries that use British style of writing dates should give the date in words: January five, nineteen sixty instead of 5/1/60 as in Britain. The examiner will conclude wrongly, thinking you gave May 1, 1960.

4. Q. What is your place of birth?

Comment: Do not try to be fanciful. Give the name of the town in your birth certificate and passport. Do not try to give the capital city of your country as one of my clients did. It became an issue of whether or not he was lying.

5. Q. How old are you now?

Comment: The idea of plus and minus is very difficult for some people. Instead of trying to calculate your age or that of your spouse in your brain, simply give your date of birth and let the examiner do the mathematics. If you pause, the examiner would feel you are thinking of what to say.

6. Q. What is your wife's full name?

Comment: This is a sensitive and tricky question. You need to give her name with your last name, especially, if she has elected to answer your last name. If you give her maiden name as her last name, the examiner will

conclude that your marriage is fraudulent. Also note that you need to give her legal name as contained in her passport and birth certificate not her «street» name.

7. Q. What is your wife's maiden name?

Comment: If you are married to a divorcee, her former husband's name is not her maiden name. It is possible that her former husband's name is so rampant in her record, but it is important that you know your father-in-law's last name.

8. Q. Do you know how your wife came into the United States?

Comment: The examiner believes that you would have discussed such a background issue, while trying to know each one other. Such a question arose at one of the interviews, I attended, the husband did not know that his wife came into the U.S. through parole granted while asylum application was pending. Don't give the examiner any reason to disbelief your testimony.

9. Q. Where did your wife enter into the United States?

Comment: The forms filed with the INS contain information as to place of your wife's last entry into the United States. Many applicants entered without visa. Please discuss this matter and have a clear and correct answer. Please note that the USCIS now frown at any fraudulent mode of entry. You could earn a life ban from all immigration privileges instead of green card. Consult an attorney before filing.

10. Q. Have you ever been married before?

Comment: You may consider this question a piece of cake, but it could derail you. Some lawyers will deal with only one party until the interview date. Do not conclude that your spouse was married before because she has children. People give funny answers to certain questions. The form 1-130 filed with Immigration has such information, please try to know everything about your spouse's past.

11. Q. Do you or your wife have children outside this marriage?

Comment: This question could be asked for two reasons. First the question could be asked in evaluating whether the family has sufficient income to comply with the Public Charge Law. It could also be asked to test your knowledge of your spouse. An applicant may give information of children born outside the United States to their attorney at the time of filing, but never discuss anything about them with the wife. The examiner has the information; please discuss the children before the interview.

12. Q. What are the names of these children?

Comment: It is important to know the names of your step-children. If you answer «I don't know» you will cast doubt in the mind of the examiner. If the names are such that you cannot pronounce, you may be asked to spell them.

13. Q. How old are your spouse's children?

Comment: It is better to give the date of birth, if you know than to estimate the age. If you do not know the date of birth, tell the examiner; Child «A» is about 10 years old, etc.

14. Q. What is the name of the school your step-children presently attend?

Comment: You must care enough to know the name of their school. It is important. Be sure to go as far as knowing the names of their teachers.

5. Q. Do you plan to have children with your wife?

Comment: Your answer should simply be; «yes» or «no». Do not start to give reasons why you have not had a child yet. Let the examiner ask you. At one interview, my Clients were asked nine different questions on this

issue because one of the parties volunteered health reason for not having children. Don't trap yourself. Let the examiner ask you, do not volunteer any information.

16. Q. What is the date of your marriage?

Comment: This is an all important date. A nervous client was asked this question. Instead of March, she said May. In fact she gave three different dates before regaining her composure. The examiner will not give you any benefit of doubt. The examiner will simply conclude, you do not know because it is not an important date to you.

17. Q. Where did you get married?

Comment: You need to know the venue of your marriage. Do not just say «Long Island» when you can say «Hempstead».

18. Q. How did you get to your wedding?

Comment: This question simply requires you to give the mode of transportation to the venue. A client once said he got to the wedding by cab and the wife said she was driven there in a limousine. To the examiner there was conflict, but they were actually saying the same thing. In Africa, every rented car is a cab. The man simply referred to the limousine, as a cab* Give an American answer to an American question; otherwise you may confuse the examiner to your own detriment.

19. Q. How many people attended your wedding?

Comment: The examiner wants to know whether the day was so important to the parties that they invited family members. It is not mandatory that many people must attend. The presence of the family members could add weight to your case, but that alone cannot guarantee success.

20. Q. Who were your witnesses?

Comment: It is important that the couple know the names of their witnesses. In one interview, the woman answered that only her husband's friends attended. She did not know their names and never met them before. This suggests «arrange» marriage. Be prepared.

21. Q. Did your mother attend the wedding?

Comment: Marriage is so sacred that it is expected that parents of the couples would attend, except when they are handicapped, for medical reasons, out of town or not in good terms with the couple. Please know what to say.

22. Q. Did you exchange wedding rings?

Comment: Usually the examiner would have observed your fingers to see if you have wedding rings. Please make it a practice to wear your rings. In America, exchange of rings seems to be a necessity especially to the women; therefore, if you attend the interview without your ring, the examiner might form a negative opinion.

23. Q. Who bought the ring?

Comment: Usually men purchase the rings. This question is very critical during stokes interview because of the next few questions. All these must be discussed before the interview, simply because the examiner expects you to know.

24. Q. Where did you purchase the rings?

Comment: At one stokes interview, I guessed the couple loaned the rings, the man already said he purchased the rings, not knowing what the wife would say, he became evasive in his answer to this question until the examiner pinned him down to an answer. The wife cleverly bailed him out with «I don't know where he purchased them.

25. Q. Was your wife present when you bought the rings?

Comment: Thank God, the man in my previous comment did not say his wife was present. «I don't know» would have been a fatal answer. Always maintain your cool, but be at alert. Always anticipate the next question in giving your answer. You are dealing with a lawyer; you could be trapped with your own answer. Be prepared.

26. Q. What did you do after the wedding ceremony?

Comment: The answer to this question is very important. Most interviews I have attended, people claimed they went for dinner. It is not mandatory that there must be dinner after wedding, if you could not afford it. Do not lie, that could trap you when other questions are asked.

27. Q. Was there a reception after the wedding or dinner and who attended?

Comment: Your answer could lead to series of questions such as venue, menu, time; etc. Anticipate all follow-up questions and be sure you are ready to answer them before you create a make-believe reception in your mind. The best answer is always the truth.

28. Q. Where did you meet your wife?

Comment: This is the most commonly asked question. The examiners sing this like a sting. Be ready. Your answer must make sense. Listen and answer only the question «where». Do not volunteer additional information. Wait for the next question.

29. Q. How did you meet your wife?

Comment: At one interview, the man said, I met her at the Airport, she went home with me and we got married less than 30 days thereafter. It is possible because love is blind they say, but let your story make sense to you before telling others; the answer must not be complicated, make it simple and understandable. You must be able to present a coherent narrative of how our meeting led to marriage.

30. Q. When did you meet your wife?

Comment: It is better to give the date, if you can remember rather than say six months before we got married. At one interview, the wife said the couples met six months before marriage. When pressed further for date, she said January and they got married in April. We are not all very good in mathematics, save yourself the headache.

31. Q. Who approached the other and how?

Comment: In today's world, women do approach men too. It is not mandatory that the man approached the woman; tell it the way it happened. This, question calls for a short story. Do not make it long. For example, I met her at the lobby of my apartment, we rode in the elevator together, I greeted her and paid her a compliment. She smiled and we started talking. Do not take it beyond the question; wait to see if another question will follow.

32. Q. Where was your husband living before your marriage?

Comment: The examiner has the information with dates in the bio-data information submitted with the application for adjustment of status. Please make sure you reviewed the copies of the forms before going for the interview.

33. Q. Did your wife visit you before marriage and where?

Comment: The examiner is just testing to know that the marriage is not an arranged one. The parties are expected to have visited each other before committing themselves to marriage. If you get the location wrong, the interview is doomed.

34. Q. Did you live together before marriage?

Comment: This question is very simple, but technical. It is not mandatory that you must live together before marriage. The examiner is just trying to verify your credibility. The Bio-data information you submitted contain addresses where you lived and dates. The marriage certificate contains your addresses at the time of marriage. The examiner will compare your answers to these two sources of information and draw his conclusions about you. Review copies of documents filed by your attorney before the interview.

35. Q. When was the last time you had sex with your wife?

Comment: A question like this is usually asked during stokes interview. Many people will feel uncomfortable with this question. The examiner is sensitive to your privacy, but wants to know if the date given by you will match that of your partner. A correct answer will help your interview.

36. Q. Where was the last place you had sex?

Comment: This is a follow up question; you will be surprised what answer people give. Do not just assume and say in the bedroom.

37. Q. What form of birth control do you use?

Comment: This question came up at two of my recent interviews. Please know the birth control your wife is using, if she is the one using birth control. Any wrong answer will doom your Interview since this issue is an essential part of marriage.

38. Q. Do you know the color of your wife's underwear today?

Comment: The examiner will not request to see. He simply wants to know if the couples are intimate. This question could be preceded with series of such questions as to whether you slept in the same, room and got dressed together. Be ready.

39. Q. Do you have any scar or tattoos?

Comment: This question was asked recently from one of my clients. The intent of the examiner is to ascertain if the couple has an intimate relationship, at any time before the interview. If you answer yes, the examiner will ask for the location of the tattoos and the designs. Be prepared

Chapter three

Q & A About Relations

Marriage is a contract that requires careful thinking and sufficient knowledge of the other partner's family background before being entered into. The examiner believes that a true marriage appears to be those in which the parties have adequate knowledge of each other, their extended family members and their environment. Any display of lack of such knowledge will trigger doubt in the mind of the examiner. The questions herein will give both the petitioner and beneficiary the needed hints regarding the nature of knowledge required of them. These are questions from live-interviews. Some of these questions are quoted verbatim using the exact words of the examiners in some of the real interviews.

1. Q. What is your mother-in-law's name?

Comment: Most of the marriages in the United States are contracted without parental consent. The idea of the parties being consenting adults relegates the need to meet the parents of your spouse before marriage to the background; Couples often neglect to note such information as the full names of their partner's parents. You may be asked, please note them.

2. Q. What is your father-in-law's name?

Comment: If your wife was born out of wedlock, she may be carrying her mother's maiden name as her last name. She has a father and the information is in the document submitted to USCIS, please note her father's name.

3. Q. Where does your wife's parent(s) live?

Comment: You are expected to have made contact with the parents of the woman you married. If her parents are deceased, you cannot say they live in Brooklyn, New York. The examiner will bust you because form G-325 on the bio-data information of your wife, will tell the cat.

4. Q. When was the last time you and your wife saw her mother together?

Comment: Listen attentively to the question before you answer. The use of the word «together» is very important especially if this question was asked at a stake interview. Your wife will not be privy to your answer. She may give a totally different date and time. Such an answer could derail the interview.

5. Q. How many brothers and sisters has your wife?

Comment: Agree with your wife before the interview that any deceased brothers and sisters will not be counted. Follow the rule that says «do not volunteer information». If you simply answer two brothers and two sisters and your wife answers two brothers and three sisters, the examiner will doubt your knowledge of her family tree.

6. Q. What are the names of your wife's brothers and sisters?

Comment: Be prepared to face this type of question at the interview. Usually the examiner will ask foundation questions before asking you about names. You may be asked if you have met or have spoken to any of them before. Once you answer yes, then you are required to know their names.

7. Q. When was the last time you saw any of your wife's brothers and sisters?

Comment: There is no margin of error or guessing here. You are not at the interview to impress the examiner, but to give such answers that will make the examiner believe that you are truly married. If truly you have not met them, please say so rather than tell a lie. Meeting your wife's brothers and sisters is not germane to your success, meeting them will only score you a positive point in the mind of the examiner as being truly married.

8. Q. When was the last time you saw any of your wife's brothers and sisters together with your wife?

Comment: Your answer to the first question concerning your wife's brothers and sisters will influence how many more of such questions you will face. Know your facts before the interview.

9. Q. Where did you meet your wife's brothers and sisters?

Comment: This question is about location. It could be in your apartment, in the Church or anywhere. If you never met them, say so, but don't forget your answer to the previous questions above.

10. Q. Would you know if you wife has married sibling?

Comment: Your answer to this question will lead to another question about their children. Mere living with a woman does not constitute marriage. Make sure you discuss about your wife's family members before the interview. It will be of tremendous help, especially at a Stokes interview where you will be separated.

11. Q. Do you know if any of your wife's brothers and sisters have children?

Comment: This will lead to the names and the sexes of the children. You may be asked if you have seen the children before. If your answer is yes, definitely you will be required to know their sexes. If you do not know their names, simply let the examiner know. Do not guess.

Chapter Four

Q & A About Your Home And Environment

Sometime ago, there was a couple on the regular green card interview. The examiner started by cracking jokes and narrating his trip to Africa. He expressed his admiration for «Kente» dresses worn by people in some African countries. The clients got carried away not knowing that the man was a tough cookie.

Suddenly, without notice to clients that the interview has started, the examiner looking at the picture we provided asked the husband «what is the color of your microwave». He was shocked. He lost his composure and became nervous. He was subsequently asked about the name of his telephone provider. He was so confused that he answered «I don't know.» It is easy to conclude that a client that could not remember an answer as simple as «Verizon» was not truly married, but wait until you occupy the «hot seat» unprepared. The examiner expects that you know your home and environment well enough to answer simple questions, if you are truly married. Most of the little things that we take for granted could spell our downfall at the interview, if care is not taken. The questions below are live-questions from green card interviews; they will assist and guide you in your preparation for your own. Practice makes perfection.

1. Q. What is your current address with your wife?

Comment: The question sounds simple, but people make unexpected mistakes. Someone was asked this question and he gave the address where they were living when the petition was filed, but the Lease Agreement given to the examiner had a totally different address.

2. Q. What subway, bus or public means of transportation is closest to where you both live now?

Comment: Do not assume that the examiner knows that «A» and «C» trains run on the same line. He might be from Long Island, New York. Please mention the two in case your spouse gives just one. Advise your spouse before leaving home to listen carefully before answering the questions.

3. Q. How many blocks away is the closest train station to your home?

Comment: Once there was an interview where the man guessed the answer to this question. The wife was not sure either. She rescued him by saying that she used one-dollar cab since her job was not far from home and dollar cab stops in front of their apartment. You may not be as lucky as she was. The examiner might press further. Be prepared.

4. Q. Do you have fire escape where you both live?

Comment: This type of question you could say «I don't know» if you do not know especially if the marriage is young or you have not had fire incident in the premises. Do not try to guess. Some old buildings do not have fire escape. At one interviews, the examiner knew the exact building we were talking about. Such examiner will fault you. Be truthful.

5. Q. How many floors are in your building and on what floor is your apartment?

Comment: It is important that you know if you are truly married and living together. Your answer will lead to other questions.

6. Q. Do you have an elevator or you use the stairs?

Comment: If you live in big apartment building as suggested by your address, the examiner might know that you have an elevator. Know your facts.

7. Q. How long have you lived at your current address?

Comment: This is a tricky question. The examiner knows the answer before asking you. The answer is in your bio-data form known as form G-325. You cannot afford to make any mistake, remember there is no margin of error,

8. Q. What is your current rent per month?

Comment: Usually the examiner would have taken the lease agreement from you before asking this question. At one interview, the man answered, «I don't know» my wife handles the bills. It may be true but It sounds weird.

9. Q. Who do you pay rent to?

Comment: Be careful. If you live in a big apartment building, you cannot simply say, we pay it to Mr. Doe. The examiner might have seen other applicants living in the same apartment complex who presented rent receipts from a Management Company. Be sure of your answer.

10. Q. How many keys open the door(s) to your apartment?

Comment: Some apartments have multiple entry keys for security reasons. Some apartments have two entry doors for security purposes. It is important that you note this before going to the interview. The examiner has never been to your apartment, he has no clue except if the pictures given to him provide him with a lead. Know your facts and give your answer without hesitation.

11. Q. How do you pay for your apartment (Cash or Check)?

Comment: The answer could be cash or check. The question is simply seeking to help dig out additional evidence to support the fact that you live together. Be sure to have canceled checks or payment receipts.

12. Q. When did you move into your present apartment?

Comment: Again remember the examiner has the answer to this question in the bio-data information submitted to Immigration when the petition was filed. He has the lease to compare it with. You must be sure that your answer falls in line with the information in your file.

13. Q. When is your monthly rent due?

Comment: Most rents fall due on the first day of every month, but note your peculiar information as contained in your lease. If your lease commenced in the middle of the month, your rent probably falls due in the middle of every month.

14. Q. Do you have windows in the kitchen and bathroom, if yes how many?

Comment: It is important that you do not take this simple piece of information for granted. Many of us do not know the plate numbers of our vehicles, so it is possible not to note every minute detail about our apartments. Do not guess, be sure.

15. Q. Do you have a shower curtain or a glass?

Comment: Some so-called couples have never lived together before nor visited one another before the interview date. This question is meant to fish out such «arranged couples». Note that couples who are truly married, living in the same premises could make mistakes too, especially, if they have multiple bathrooms. Give answers that will not create confusion, anticipate your partner's.

16. Q. Do you have closets in your bedroom, if yes how many?

Comment: There was an interview where the husband in response to this question simply answered counting the linen closet in the hallway, whereas the wife gave the number of closets in the bedroom. The couple was able to reconcile the inconsistencies when the next question was posed.

17. Q. Are the closets built inside the walls or not?

Comment: Please note that even if the closet is free standing, you need to count it.

18. Q. Where do you keep extra rolls of bathroom tissues?

Comment: This question was asked in lots of the interviews for the past few years. Note the word «extra». The examiner knows that you have extra. A couple with a big bathroom could keep them under the vanity or in some storage closets in the bathroom, but note your peculiar situation.

19. Q. Where do you keep your dirty cloths?

Comment: Some people use laundry bags, while some use hamper. This question was asked several times also. It is meant to gauge the intimacy of the couple

20. Q. What is the color of your laundry bag or hamper?

Comment: The examiner will ask this question if he suspects that you are guessing. Some colors are border line colors. If possible agree on what the correct name of the color is. Some brown look like wine color, don't give the examiner room to doubt your answer.

21. Q. Whose voice is on your answering machine?

Comment: Most of the time, either of the couple occupied the apartment or house before the other partner moved in. The interview usually occurs before couples settle down to marital life. You need to know whose voice is on the machine. The machine could also have been prerecorded.

22. Q. What is your telephone number?

Comment: In this age of cell phone, a question like this is ambiguous. You need to ask the examiner if he means your home phone. If you have more than one phone number give your main number, do not volunteer information about your other lines because your partner might not remember the numbers.

23. Q. Do you have a cell phone?

Comment: Simply answer «yes» or «no». Let the examiner ask the follow up question.

24. Q. What is your wife's cell phone number?

Comment: You should be expecting this question. Do not try to guess. If you can't remember simply say you have it in your pocket book or it is programmed into your cell phone.

25. Q. Where does your wife work?

Comment: Usually you will be asked about your wife's information and vice versa. If your wife works two jobs and you know them both, give them. It is important you do not leave any room for the examiner to conclude wrongly.

26. Q. What are your wife's hours at work?

Comment: It is important that you know your partner's schedule. Any mistake will raise doubt about your marriage. For example, someone came with a denial notice. They were denied simply because the wife said the husband closes at work by 5:30 p.m. and the husband says 7:30 p.m.. The husband erroneously gave the time he gets home as the time he closes at work.

27. Q. Do you have a beeper, if yes how long have you had it?

Comment: This question does not make any sense, but it was asked at an interview. You could be asked about your spouse's beeper. If she got the beeper after your wedding, you are expected to know when she got the beeper, since you might have contacted her using the beeper.

28. Q. How does your wife reach you when you are at work?

Comment: Simply answer «how». It could be through the office phone, cell phone or beeper. If she uses more than one means, please give a general answer like «sometimes on my cell phone, sometimes on the office phone».

29. Q. Did your wife work yesterday?

Comment: This is a question that could mar the interview completely. If you miss the answer, the examiner will never believe your marriage is real. If you miss the answer to this question the interview is over.

30. Q. Do you go to Church with your wife?

Comment: Do not try to be fanciful and play the Christian if you are not. In fact lying might derail you. If the answer is «yes» say it. Your answer could be that you attend Church together occasionally, but anticipate the follow up questions.

31. Q. What Church and where?

Comment: You now need to give the name and address of the church. If you do not know the street number you must at least know the name of the street.

32. Q. When was the last time you were in Church together and how did you leave the Church?

Comment: Be sure of your answer. At an interview, the husband said he left the Church in a friend's car while the wife said she left with the husband in the husband's car. Any such inconsistencies could spell doom.

33. Q. What is the name of your Pastor?

Comment: It is possible to attend a church without knowing the name of the pastor especially if you are being dragged to the Church by your wife occasionally. Let the examiner know. Do not just say, I don't know, please give a brief explanation.

34. Q. How did you get to the interview venue?

Comment: The examiner expects you to say that you got to the interview with your wife using the same mode of transportation, but occasionally, people attend afternoon interview directly from work. Your wife must know that you came from work.

35. Q. What form of transportation did you use?

Comment: This question becomes relevant if you lied in your answer to the question above. If you say you came together, your answer must be the same with that of your wife.

36. Q. Did you go to the doctor With your spouse for the medical examination for this interview?

Comment: It is not mandatory that you must go with your spouse, but if your answer is yes, just know that other questions will follow.

37. Q. Where was the medical examination done?

Comment: This question will be asked if you answer yes to the above question. Be prepared.

38. Q. How much did your spouse pay for the medical examination?

Comment: The examiner expects you to have discussed it, if you are truly married. Make sure you have all your information and know everything about the process leading to the interview.

39. Q. When was the medical examination done?

Comment: The date is essential; if you cannot remember the date, just give the month.

40. Q. What is the color of your microwave oven?

Comment: This was the shocking question asked from one client, the examiner could ask this type of question using the documents and pictures provided. Make sure you know the minute details in the photos given at the interview. It is observed that some people go to the interview with big photo albums. It is okay, but you might be volunteering too much, if your marriage is young. We recommend that you select photos that best project your marriage, study them before you give them to the examiner.

41. Q. What colors are your toaster, refrigerator, kitchen table, couch, telephone, computer, radio etc?

Comment: Please know your colors. Some colors are similar. Discuss colors with your spouse. Usually some of these items are in the pictures given to the examiner.

42. Q. Has your spouse ever traveled since you got married?

Comment: It seems that this question did not make sense until I found out that people give conflicting answers. Your spouse might have made a short trip for business purposes to a neighboring State which you did not consider a trip, but to him it was a trip. Please discuss this. It is not a trip to Europe, Asia or Africa alone that qualifies to be called one.

43. Q. Where and when did she travel?

Comment: Be prepared for this question. If you cannot remember the exact date give the month or season. If you traveled together, please add that to your answer since that will give credibility to your marriage. You must be able to tell the means of transportation used.

44. Q. How long did her trip last?

Comment: Do not forget that you have just given your passport to the examiner, he can see the reentry stamp in your passport, and therefore he has an idea of dates. You need to master your facts in order to excel.

45. Q. What was your spouse's gross income in the preceding year?

Comment: Some people do not know the income of their spouse. This is usually kept a secret to curtail demands. It is important that you know, if you must succeed at the interview. You need to know how much he earns weekly or biweekly. In fact your tax returns given to the examiner will give him an idea of your spouse's income, especially if you have filed returns together.

46. Q. What is the color of the carpet in your apartment?

Comment: You need to exercise caution when trying to answer these questions. At one interview this question came up. The African man said the color is «Ox-blood», the American lady said «burgundy». They were saying the same thing, but the examiner thought there was a conflict until they cleared the confusion.

47. Q. Where were you and your Spouse born?

Comment: People usually give the capital city of their countries as their place of birth for convenience sake since the examiner might have heard the names of such cities before. This is wrong, it will confuse the examiner. Make sure your answer corresponds with what is in your passport and birth certificate.

48. Q. Where did you celebrate your last birthday?

Comment: Some clients have tried to be fanciful and they ended up making mistakes. Do not try to impress the examiner. Tell it exactly how it happened. The one simply said, my husband gave me a card and we prepared an African dish at home and ate. The examiner was satisfied.

49. Q. Did you give your husband a gift for his birthday?

Comment: This question is usually asked if the birthday of one of the parties came up shortly before the interview. Tell the examiner what you gave. Do not make up gifts. It does not matter what you gave, the examiner is simply trying to see how you will respond.

50. Q. Do you smoke?

Comment: This is a simple question answer it with a yes or no. Do not forget that you could be asked the same question about your spouse especially with regards to the type of cigarette he smokes.

51. Q. Does your wife use any medication?

Comment: You need to know. At one interview the examiner asked about the type of medication one of the parties was using. He called it antidepressant; the other party called it medication for bipolar disorder. You need to master your environments.

52. Q. How many telephone sets do you have in your apartment?

Comment: It is important that you know this. If you give conflicting answers, the examiner will conclude that you do not live together. It is possible to miss the answer if you are not prepared. A fax machine with a handset by the side to some qualifies for a telephone while some will not count it. Discuss this matter before the interview.

53. Q. Where are the telephone boxes placed in your apartment?

Comment: It is not enough to know how many they are, you also need to know their locations in your apartment. Do not just assume and mention locations where phones are generally placed in homes.

54. Q. Do you have television sets, if yes how many?

Comment: At a recent interview, this question came up. The examiner adopted the most unusual approach. She typed ten questions and asked my clients to write the answers. The man wrote one television, the woman said two. Eventually, we discovered that the man wrote one because the one in the bedroom no longer works. Be careful.

55. Q. Do you have a computer, if yes what brand name. E.g. IBM, Dell?

Comment: The color of the computer and the brand name came up at one Stokes interview. Some people may not be computer friendly; however they need to know about everything in their apartment to pass.

56. Q. Do you have Internet, if yes, who is your service provider?

Comment: This is a technology age, the examiner will assume that if you are relatively young you should be using a computer. You need to know the name of your Internet provider.

57. Q. How often do you do laundry and who does it?

Comment: Be careful with this question. Laundry could be done by anyone. Your answer could be every weekend or every Saturday. If it is irregular, please say so.

58. Q. Where do you do your laundry and when was the last time it was done?

Comment: If you have a washing machine at home. Let the examiner know. Answer the question but do not volunteer any further information.

59. Q. How far is the Laundromat from your home?

Comment: You could measure the distance in blocks or by the number of minutes it takes you to drive there. Be close to being accurate.

60. Q. Do you have a car, if yes, what is the make and color. How many doors has your car?

Comment: If your spouse has a car and you do not know the name and color, the examiner will conclude that your marriage is arranged.

61. Q. When did you wake up today and who woke up first?

Comment: This is to ascertain that you live together. It is easy to miss the answer, depending on what waking up means. Some people wake up to read the Bible or to take a shower and only to go back to bed again be prepared and know your answer.

62. Q. When did you leave your home for the interview (TIME)?

Comment: Some people meet at the interview venue for various reasons. One might be coming from work. Make sure you watch and know everything that happened that morning. They could be the subject of your interview

63. Q. Do you use an alarm clock, if yes, where is it located in your apartment?

Comment: You need to be familiar with your new home. The irony of it is that one of the partners might have just moved into the apartment after the wedding and this could be just a couple of months before the interview. You need to study your environment very fast especially in States where interviews are scheduled less than six months after filing.

64. Q. Did you use the same or different metro cards to get to the interview venue?

Comment: Your answer should simply be either yes or no. If you traveled by car, simply say so.

Chapter Five

Q&A About Documents Filed With USCIS

It is quite unfortunate that many failed immigration interviews due to their inability to answer correctly questions drawn from documents they submitted to the Immigration. It is usually assumed by attorneys that the client will remember even the minutest detail which they provided when the application was filed months or years before the interview. Experience has shown that various factors, including but not limited to nervousness, little education, etc militate against parties at immigration interviews. The tendency to forget some information which might be of interest to the examiner is very high. For example, an American spouse could be asked about how her spouse entered the United States. If her memory is not refreshed before the interview, she might miss the answer and say «he came through the JFK Airport», since JFK Airport is usually the point of entry for most immigrant. The correct answer based on information already given to Immigration, could be that he entered illegally through Canada. It is therefore, important that you obtain copies of the forms filed with immigration together with the attached documents from your attorney and review them with your spouse before the interview. I have itemized below some of the questions you may be asked from the forms submitted to Immigration. It is important to point out that the list below is not exhaustive, since I have eliminated some questions already discussed in previous chapters of this book to avoid repetition.

1. Q. Have you ever, in or outside the US knowingly committed any crime of moral turpitude or a drug related offence for which you have not been arrested?

Comment: Listen carefully before you answer this question. Your answer will determine whether or not you will get the green card. A «yes» answer could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions such as request for copy of the disposition.

2. Q. Have you ever, in or outside the US been arrested, cited charged, indicted, fined or imprisoned for breaking or violating any law or ordinance, excluding traffic violations?

Comment: Don't forget the INS has your fingerprint. The FBI would have confirmed your previous arrest. A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card, but if you have a disposition verifying the dismissal of your case, make sure you take a sealed original to the interview to avoid delay.

3. Q. Have you ever in or outside the U.S. been the beneficiary of a pardon, amnesty, rehabilitation decree, other act of clemency or similar action? Exercised diplomatic immunity to avoid prosecution for a criminal offense in the US.

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If your answer is yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

4. Q. Have you received public assistance in US from any source, including the US government or any state, county, city or municipality (other than emergency medical treatment), or are you likely to receive public assistance in the future?

Comment: This question is directed at the alien. It is the law, under the Public Charge Law that any individual that will become a public charge, (that is, feed on the government of the United States) through welfare program or any program whatsoever should not be given green card. A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card.

5. Q. Have you ever within the past ten years been a prostitute or procured anyone for prostitution or intend to engage in such activities in the future?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions. The law of the United States discourages prostitution, therefore, if you have practiced prostitution, you are a violator of the law, you will not be given green card.

6. Q. Have you ever engaged in any unlawful commercialized vice, including, but not limited to illegal gambling?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

7. Q. Have you ever knowingly encouraged, duced, assisted, abetted or aided any alien to try to enter the US illegally?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

8. Q. Have you ever illicitly trafficked in any controlled substance, or knowingly assisted, abetted or colluded in the illicit trafficking of any controlled substance?

Comment: Under the law of the United States, drug trafficking is considered a serious offense. A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

9. Q. Have you ever engaged in, conspired to engage in, or do you intend to engage in, or have you ever solicited membership or funds for, or have you through any means ever assisted or provided any type of material support to any person or organization that has engaged or conspired to engage, in sabotage, kidnapping, political assassination, hijacking or any other form of terrorist activity?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

10. Q. Do you intend to engage in any of the following in the US?

a. espionage?

b. Any activity, a purpose of which is opposition to, or control or overthrow of the government of the United States by force, violence or other unlawful means?

c. Any activity to violate or any law prohibiting the export from the United States of goods, technology or sensitive information?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

11. Q. Have you ever been a member of or in any way affiliated with the Communist party or any other Totalitarian party?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

12. Q. Did you during the period from March 23,1933 to May 1945 in association with the Nazi government of Germany or any other organization or government associated or allied with the Nazi party of Germany, ever order, incite, assist or otherwise participated in the persecution of any person because of race, religion, national origin or political opinion?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

13. Q. Have you ever engaged in genocide, or otherwise ordered, incited, assisted or otherwise participated in the killing of any person because of race, religion nationality, ethnic origin or political opinion?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

14. Q. Have you ever been deported from the US or removed from the US at government expense excluded within the past year, or are you now in exclusion or deportation proceedings?

Comment: You will need an attorney to explain the implication of this question to you. A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. Please note that if you have been ordered deported the Immigration has no jurisdiction over your case. You will need to obtain an order reopening the deportation case from the Judge

before you could be scheduled for stokes interview. However, you will need to consult an immigration attorney before filing any document with Immigration because of the complexity of your case.

15. Q. Are you under a final order of civil penalty for violating section 274c of the Immigration and Nationality Act for use of fraudulent documents or have you by fraud or willful misrepresentation of a material fact ever sought to procure or procured a visa or other documentation for entry into the U.S. or for any immigration benefit?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. Please note that if a final order has been rendered against you for committing immigration fraud, you may be barred for life from all immigration privileges.

16. Q. Have you ever left the U.S. to avoid being drafted into the U.S. Armed Forces?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

17.Q. Have you ever been a J non-immigrant exchange visitor who was subject to the two year foreign residence requirement and have not yet complied with that requirement or obtained a waiver?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. You will heed the Attorney General's waiver before you can adjust your status in the United States. Consult an attorney before filing any document with immigration.

18. Q. Are you withholding custody of a U.S. citizen (child) outside the U.S. from a person granted custody of the child?

Comment: A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

19. Q. Do you plan to practice polygamy in the U. S?

Comment: Polygamy is illegal in the United States. A «yes» could stop you from getting the green card. If you answer yes, be prepared for follow-up questions.

20. Q. What is your social security number?

Comment: It is not mandatory that you must know your social security number off hand. You need to bring it to the interview, in case you are asked.

21. Q. What is the name of your spouse's prior wife/husband and the date their marriage ended?

Comment: If only for the purpose of the interview, please try and discuss this matter. One man was asked this question, she answered, «I was not interested in such information». Even though the answer made sense, the examiner seemed not to be too happy with the answer.

22. Q. When did your spouse's begin working with her present employer?

Comment: Don't forget the date has been given to immigration in the bio-data form submitted. Do not try to guess. If he started before you got married simply say that.

23. Q. Has your relative ever been under immigration proceedings?

Comment: If you know simply say so. Don't forget a yes answer could stop your spouse from getting the green card. Make sure your answer is consistent with information given to the Immigration.

24. Q. Where have you lived in the past five years?

Comment: You gave the information to the Immigration when you filed the application; make sure your answer is consistent with the information already provided.

25. Q. What was your last address outside the U. S.A.?

Comment: You gave the information to the Immigration when you filed the application, make sure your answer is consistent with the information already provided.

26. Q. Who are your employers for the last five years?

Comment: You gave the information to the Immigration when you filed the application; make sure your answer is consistent with the information already provided.

27. Q. Was your spouse inspected by a U.S. immigration officer at the point of entry?

Comment: You gave the information to the Immigration when you filed the application; make sure your answer is consistent with the information already provided.

28. Q. Are you a member or in affiliation with any political organization, association, fund, foundation, party club, society or similar group in the U.S. or in other places since your 16th birthday? Include any foreign military service in this part.

Comment: You gave the information to the Immigration when you filed the application; make sure your answer is consistent with the information already provided. A «no» for an answer will not hurt your petition.

Chapter Six

Keys To Handling USCIS Question.

Sometime ago, a client who was married to an American was invited for the second interview called «stokes interview». At the pre-interview conference, client asked, «what should I expect». He got the reply «the worst». She thought it was a joke, knowing fully well that they were truly married. They had started living together and they seemed to know everything about each other. Regardless of the client's confidence, the attorney spent hours preparing her and the husband for the interview. In fact they discussed every possible detail of their relationship. The only thing they did not discuss was the number of the train they took to the venue for the interview. Surprisingly, when confident client was asked about the train they took to the interview, she flunked. She said «A train», Her husband said «C» and «A trains». As trivial as this seemed, the examiner saw conflict. Luckily, the examiner believed the attorney because he said they traveled in the train together. That little incident could derail the approval of the green card they had been longing for. Alas! It is true. You could fail «the stokes» or «regular» interview even if you are truly married and you live together. You could avoid being embarrassed by preparing very well for the interview. A good attorney's work actually starts and is completed few days before the interview. If your attorney did not prepare you, you have not received the services you paid for. As sure as it is in a regular court system, where the decision of the Judge could be based on exercise of discretions, decipher from the Judge's perception of the demeanor of the witness, the body language, the pitch of his voice, the accuracy of facts, same holds true during immigration interviews. It is important that you give your case the best and most attractive face to woo the examiner to your side in his exercise of discretions. To accomplish this goal, there are designed some dos and don'ts that will help you win these hostile examiners to your side. The tips contained in this book have also helped my clients pass their interviews. They are sort of antidotes to a successful immigration practice.

TIP# 1. DO NOT VOLUNTEER INFORMATION.

Interestingly, most attorneys assume you know well enough not to volunteer any information. The shorter your answers are, the higher your chances. Information could be volunteered verbally or through documents. A careful witness or client will limit his answers to question asked. Over zealotry could derail or prolong the interview. For example, at the stokes interview when the man was asked whether or not they intended to have children. The simple answer was supposed to be either yes or no, but the man answered and said «yes, we intend to have children, but the reason why we have not had any yet is that my wife had an operation.....» The answer given by this overzealous man led to nine new questions that were not included in the original questions the examiner intended to ask them. You could dig a hole for yourself by volunteering information. Once there was a client, whose African name could be shortened by removing the prefix «OLUWA» from it; when asked her name, instead of simply saying it, she said, «in Nigeria, they call me... and when I got to America, I «changed it to ... because people could not pronounce the name». As truthful as that was, it led to some new questions which were not in the examiners script; Apply wisdom, volunteer information only when it is necessary to get you out of a hole.

TIP №2. IF YOU CANNOT CONVINC THEM, EXPLAIN YOUR ANSWER.

Be smart in response to questions that could trap you especially when you are not sure of what your spouse will say. Do not forget that you could be separated from your spouse at the interview and the same questions you are being asked, your spouse will need to answer to establish consistency. For example, if you are asked what your husband's favorite food is and you are not sure of what he will say, please give a general answer. Give an answer that will be correct or at least close to being correct, regardless of what your spouse says to this question. Another way to use this tip, when you are not sure of the exact answer is to explain as briefly as possible. There was an immigration interview, client, who was truly a Pastor, was asked, «who is the mother in law of Ruth in the Bible», He forgot because of the tension of the environment. It was known, she was very versed in the Bible, but lawyer could not help her answer the question,; because lawyer was not there as a Pastor but as an attorney. She started narrating the story of Ruth without mentioning the name, Naomi. The examiner

knew from the story that she simply forgot the name and passed her. Do not confuse this tip with tip # 1, there is no need to tell stories if you know the answer. Do not volunteer information.

TIP # 3. DO NOT TRY TO GUESS WHAT YOUR SPOUSE WILL SAY.

There is a wise saying that the «devil himself know eth not the intent of a man». Guessing will mar your case, it will not save you. There is no harm in saying, «I cannot remember* or «I don't know». Even though such answers will not earn you credit, at least it will not be counted against you either. For example, one client was asked, «who first met your mother-in- Law when she came out of the hospital». She remembered this tip and said «I cannot remember» because she was not sure of the correct answer.

Funny enough; her husband said «my wife». Lawyer later asked her what was in her head at that time and she said «my husband». This tip saved the day. Apply wisdom, note that you cannot say «I don't know» if you are asked about your father's name. Such an answer will simply lead to denial of your application.

TIP#4 AVOID THE PHRASE “I THINK...”

The interview venue is not the place/time to think, it is the time to know or forever hold your peace. «I think» will not help you. It will simply raise doubt in the mind of the examiner. If you know the answer and you are sure your spouse will say the same thing, please give it. For example, someone was asked at the airport whether or not her passport was genuine, because she was so used to the phrase “I think” she answered and said «I think so. ». The inspector did not allow her to enter the United States but detained her pending verification. For the few minutes that the interview will last, please try to give your case the best face.

TIP #5. DO NOT GIVE A BUNCH OF DOCUMENTS TO THE EXAMINER UNLESS YOU ARE SURE OF EVERY INFORMATION IN THE DOCUMENTS.

Sometimes some attorneys just give whatever bunch of documents' received from their clients to the examiners* If you do that, you might, have just provided the examiner with a coffin with which to bury you. Be prepared; carefully separate all documents to be given to the examiner. Study them carefully. At the interview, allow the examiner to ask you for what he needs. After he exhausts his list, most of the time you will be asked, if you have any additional documents. At that time, carefully select documents believe will support your case and give them. Any document that is not in your joint names is not necessary. Let your attorney make the decision and determine when and what to give.

TIP #6. THERE IS NO HARM IN SAYING «I DON'T KNOW», «I CAN'T REMEMBER» OR «I CANNOT RECOLLECT. »

Even though, answers of these natures will not score you any mark, they will not remove from your marks either. It is better to say « I can't remember than to guess wrong. Please note that there are certain things you must know if you are truly married. For example, if you are asked about your husband's name, you cannot say «I can't remember» that will be making a mockery of the entire process. Be prepared.

Chapter Seven. Code of Conduct at USCIS Interview: Dos & Don'ts.

There are certain dos and don'ts that must be observed at the interview before you can have a good chance at success. The result of an interview will be based on both the verbal and non verbal communication between you and the examiner. He will assess your demeanor, your physical appearance, the information you provide and exercise his discretions in your favor or against you. It is important that you package your case like a «bride» ready for the «bridegroom». Now that you are before the examiner, the following tips will help (increase your chances of winning at the interview):

LEAVE NOBODY AT HOME DURING THE INTERVIEW.

This should not be construed to suggest that I am doubting your marriage. Occasionally, the examiner could call your home while the interview is going on. If you leave a stranger at home, such a stranger could furnish information that will affect the outcome of your Interview. Most examiners are in a hurry; they could get a piece or incomplete information and act on it to deny your application. Do not leave any stone unturned.

GIVE SHORT AND DIRECT ANSWERS TO ALL QUESTIONS.

There is no room for error at the interview. Do not talk too much. Answer the questions and leave the rest to the examiner. Do not be eager to add explanation to any answer, except where such an explanation will bail you out of a mistake.

DRESS WELL TO THE INTERVIEW.

Comment: At any given interview, be it job or immigration, non verbal mode of communication says a lot about who you are. The examiner will surely factor your physical appearance into his perception of you. As you know, first impression lasts a long time. Please put on clothing that will make you look responsible. For example, If you appear before an examiner with your pant drawn down like most teenagers, it will surely affect the perception of the examiner. The examiner might doubt your marriage, because your appearance does not support the responsible role of a husband. Therefore, if you appear like a hooligan or a thug, you may not get the favorable result you desire and deserve. You would have helped the examiner to conclude wrongly. Be moderate, neat and presentable.

BE CALM AND COLLECTED.

At the interview, your greatest enemy is nervousness. If you are nervous, it will affect your answers, it will raise suspicion and it will cast a cloud of falsehood over your head. It is human to be nervous, but being nervous will mar your case. Ask me! You could hide your nervousness. Look straight into the examiner's face, cross your legs and relax. Do not seat on the edge of the chair.

NO UMMMM AHFFF BEFORE YOUR ANSWERS.

We were taught in Law School that it is not good for lawyers to use ummmm aaaahhh before responding to questions. The use of ummmm reduces the speed at which you think because you are used to pausing to think. At the interview table, the examiner will simply conclude that you need time to cook up the next lie that is the reason for your use of ummmm before every answer. Give your case the best face.

DO NOT LOOSE YOUR GUARD, EVEN IF THE EXAMINER TRIES CRACKING JOKES.

Some examiners are used to cracking funny jokes as a way to distract, destabilize you and make you loose your guard. You know the reason behind your being on the «hot seat». Remain focused.

Submit only those documents you have reviewed with your spouse.

At the interview, the examiner might request for a document you have in your file. You need to make a quick decision as to whether or not need to submit the document at the interview table. Do not submit such additional strange document if the questions the examiner might ask will put your spouse in trouble. If the submission of the document is essential to the granting of your application, the examiner will give you an opportunity to send the document by mail. For example, if an examiner asks you for the birth certificate of a child born out of wedlock and you know that your spouse will not remember the full name of the other parent of the child, it will not be wise to submit such a birth certificate, but elect to have it mailed.

DO NOT BELL THE CAT WITH YOUR FACIAL EXPRESSION.

If you are asked a question and you are comfortable with the answer you gave or if your spouse gives an answer that you know is wrong, do not allow your facial expression to sell you out. If you give the examiner the impression that something is wrong, he will explore that particular area of questioning to your detriment until you are derailed. Apply common sense.

LOOK AT THE EXAMINER EYE TO EYE WHEN ANSWERING HIS QUESTIONS.

Some people are so shy that they would rather look down than look into the examiner's eyes when answering his questions. The examiner is a good observer. Looking down gives an impression that you are lying. Look straight into the examiner's face.

BE AUDIBLE.

This is funny. I once took a full grown man to an interview. Suddenly the examiner could no longer hear the man across the table. You need to be audible to show that you have nothing to hide.

PLACE YOUR DOCUMENTS WHERE YOUR NERVOUSNESS WON'T SHOW.

At times we cannot control being nervous. If you find yourself in this position, please do all you can to hide your nervousness. Being nervous will not help your case. I suggest that you put your documents on the floor by your seat where the examiner will not be able to see your nervous hands in case you need to get a document from the pile

Chapter Eight. What Could Happen At The Interview

It is the desire of every applicant that only one thing happens at the interview, namely, «APPLICATION APPROVED» unfortunately, other funny things do happen at the interview. At the regular interview popularly known as the «first interview», one of three things could happen. The result will dictate what your next action should be. APPROVAL:

By the time the interview is getting to an end you will have some indication as to whether you 100 have been approved or not. If you are successful, the examiner will take your passport and stamp the green card into it. The stamp will be valid for one year. The stamp will authorize you to work and you may travel outside the United States using the green card stamp for reentry. All you need to do is to go home and celebrate your victory. The actual green card will come in the mail within six months from the date of your interview. If your marriage was less than two years old at the time you received the green card stamp, the plastic green card you receive in the mail will be valid for only two years. This is called conditional green card. You will need to remove the condition within 90 days before the expiration of the two years. If you fail to remove the condition timely, you will be back to square one. For the purpose of removing the condition, you will need an immigration attorney to assist you. This is a stage at which your green card is most vulnerable. You may lose it. You will need to remain married to be able to remove the condition with ease.

2. PENDING WITH REQUEST FOR DOCUMENTS:

Usually, applicants' without attorneys end up with this result. You might have done so well at the interview, but if the documents you submitted are not complete, the examiner will not be able to approve your application. Pending endorsement is not a denial, it simply means that the processing of your application remains incomplete. The examiner will give you a form called «I-72» with some checked items. You will need to send the requested documents by mail. Some applicants get stuck at this stage. Some files are abandoned in the cabinet or they simply get lost and the waiting game becomes endless.

It is advisable that you fill out an inquiry form from time to time to keep your file active once you have submitted the additional documents requested.

3. PENDING FOR STOKES INTERVIEW:

Stokes interview otherwise known as «the second interview» is the most difficult form of interview an applicants could be subjected to. Stokes is scheduled if the parties fail the first interview. This book is designed to help you pass the first interview and avoid stokes, but if you find yourself at the stokes interview table, this book will also become invaluable. You will definitely need it. Usually, when you fail the first interview, some examiner will tell you, some will simply endorse your passport with a notation that your case is pending without any request for additional documents. Some examiners will give you an appointment for stokes at the table, while some will simply tell you to expect a letter in the mail. Stokes interview takes place about a year from the date of your first interview. At the stokes interview, your case will either be denied or approved depending on your performance.